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Case Study

A CASE STUDY ON THE ADD-ON EFFECT OF *KESHARADI GHRITA* WITH FERROUS ASCORBATE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF *MRIDBHAKSHANJANYA PANDU* (PICA)

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ABSTRACT

Mridbhakshanjanya Pandu, an Ayurvedic condition correlated with iron deficiency anemia due to pica, is a prevalent disorder in pediatric populations, particularly in low socioeconomic settings. This case study presents a 7-year-old male with symptoms including pallor, fatigue, and habitual consumption of non-nutritive substances like clay and wall putty. Clinical and laboratory investigations confirmed iron deficiency anemia. The child was treated with a combination of *Kesharadi Ghrita*, a classical Ayurvedic formulation known for its *Pitta*-pacifying and digestive-enhancing properties, along with conventional ferrous ascorbate therapy over a 45-day period. Outcomes were assessed through symptomatic improvement and hematological parameters including hemoglobin levels, MCV, and RDW-CV. Notable clinical improvements were observed-pallor reduced from moderate to mild, appetite normalized, and pica behavior ceased. Hemoglobin levels rose from 8.2gm/dL to 10.3gm/dL without any reported side effects. The therapeutic role of *Kesharadi Ghrita* may be attributed to its *Agni Deepana* (digestive stimulant), *Krimighna* (anthelmintic), and *Rasa Dhatu Poshana* (nutritive) properties, which possibly enhanced iron absorption and corrected the underlying pathology. This case supports the integrative use of Ayurvedic interventions in pediatric anemia and highlights the need for further studies to evaluate the broader applicability of *Kesharadi Ghrita* in similar clinical contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Pica is a common pediatric behavioral condition characterized by the compulsive ingestion of non-nutritive substances like mud, chalk, or clay. When prolonged, it often leads to nutritional deficiencies, notably iron-deficiency anemia. In Ayurveda, this condition is recognized as *Mridbhakshanjanya Pandu*, a subtype of *Panduroga* described by Acharya Charaka.

Though ferrous ascorbate is effective in correcting hemoglobin levels, it often causes gastrointestinal disturbances. *Kesharadi Ghrita*, noted in Charaka Samhita, is traditionally used to treat *Mridbhakshanjanya Pandu*. With its *Pitta-shamaka* and *Krimighna* properties, it can enhance digestion, reduce pica cravings, and improve iron absorption.

The case of this study is a 7 years old male with Pica. The clinical symptoms identified in the present case report corelates with *Mridbhakshanjanya Pandu* and lab investigations signifies iron deficiency anemia.

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Patient information

- Age: 7 years
- Gender: Male
- Residence: Semi-urban area, low socioeconomic background

Presenting Complaints

- Pallor
- Fatigue

- Craving to eat clay, wall putti *(Mridbhakshan)*
- Abdominal discomfort
- Occasional constipation

History

Mother reported that the child had been habitually consuming clay from garden, wall putti for the past 6 months. Gradually, pallor and tiredness developed. Appetite was poor. No history of chronic illness, blood loss, or genetic disorders.

Table 1: Personal History of Patient

Diet	Vegetarian
Micturition	6-7 times a day, 1-2 times in night
Bowel	Occasional constipation
Appetite	Poor
Sleep	Normal
Addiction	No any

Table 2: *Ashtavidha Pariksha* of Patient

Nadi (Pulse)	106/min	*Shabda* (Speech)	*Spashta* (Normal)
Mutra (Urine)	6-7 times a day	*Sparsha* (Touch)	*Rukshata*
Mala (Stool)	Occasional constipation	*Drik* (Eyes)	*Panduta* (Pallor)
Jivha (Tongue)	*Sama* (Coated)	*Akriti* (Built)	Moderate

Clinical Examination

- General: Moderately built, mildly nourished.
- Vitals: Within normal limits.
- Pallor: Present on conjunctiva, palms, and nail beds.
- Weight: 18.5kg
- Abdominal exam: Mild tenderness around umbilical region.

Investigations (Day 0):

- Hemoglobin (Hb%): 8.2 g/dL | MCV: 72 fL| RDW-CV: 18.4% | Stool: Eggs of Ascaris | Serum Iron: Low

Diagnostic Assessment

Based on the signs and symptoms of present case study, he was diagnosed as *Mridbhakshanjanya pandu* (Pica). Repeated evaluation initially and on follow-up done and baseline parameters assessed.

Ayurvedic Diagnosis: *Mridbhakshanjanya Pandu.*

Modern Diagnosis: Iron deficiency anemia with Pica.

Therapeutic Intervention

Treatment Plan

- Group assignment: Trial protocol (*Kesharadi Ghrita* + Ferrous Ascorbate)
- *Kesharadi Ghrita:* 5gm orally, twice daily before meals
- Ferrous Ascorbate Syrup: 20mg elemental iron daily
- Duration: 45 days
- Dietary Advice: Iron-rich foods, avoidance of soil, deworming with albendazole on day 1

Drug Review: *Ghrita* is the most important of the four *Snehas.* It has more medicinal properties due to its *Sanskara Anuvarti Guna.* Due to cold properties, it mitigates *Pitta*, due to oiliness it mitigates *Vata* and due to processing with other medicinal herbs, it mitigates *kapha*. Among all medicines to mitigate aggravated *Vata* and *Pitta, Ghrita* is the best. Though *Ghrita* has properties contrary to those of *Pitta*, it is *Agnideepan*. It increases intellect, memory, strength, eyesight, *Rasa, Shukra,* etc. *Dhatus.*

Table 3: Drug Review

Dravya	***Rasa***	***Veerya***	***Vipaka***	***Guna***
Nagkeshar (Messua ferrea)	*Kashaya, Tikta*	*Ushna*	*Katu*	*Ruksha, Tikshna, Laghu*
Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra)	*Madhur*	*Sheet*	*Madhur*	*Guru, Snigdha*
Pimpali (Piper longum)	*Katu*	*Ushna*	*Madhur*	*Laghu, Tikshna*
Yavakshara (Hordeum vulgare)	*Madhur*	*Sheet*	*Katu*	*Ruksha, Mrudu, Aguru*
Durva (Cynodon dactylon)	*Madhur, Kashay*	*Sheet*	*Madhur*	*Laghu*

***Sadhyasadhyata* (Prognosis)**

Sadhyasadhyata of any disease is essential for treatment as it gives clue regarding treatment possible with drugs or not. *Mridbhakshanjanya pandu* is a disease affecting *Pitta dosha* and *Rasa, Rakta dhatu*. Hence *Prakruti* involving *Pitta* dominance and *Raktasarata* affects the prognosis of disease.

Pathyapathya

Patient was advised to take iron-rich foods like spinach, legumes, fortified cereals, whole grains, dried fruits. Vitamin C enhances iron absorption, so vitamin c rich food like lemon juice, oranges advised to eat. Cooking in cast iron pans advised. Avoidance of soil and any nonedible substances. Also milk and tea intake advised to avoid.

Outcome & Follow-Up

Patient was advised follow-up after 45 days of treatment with re-assessment of below parameters. Lab investigations were also advised are as follows (Table 4).

Table 4: Improvement in parameters before and after treatment

S.No.	Parameter observed	Before treatment	After treatment
1.	Pallor	Moderate	Mild
2.	Appetite	Poor	Improved
3.	Clay Craving	Frequent	None
4.	Hemoglobin %	8.2 g/dL	10.3 g/dL
5.	MCV	72 fL	82.1 fL
6.	RDW-CV	18.4%	13.2%

Adverse Effects

None observed. Child reported improved digestion and increased energy.

DISCUSSION

Pandu Roga is the most common illness among children. Nearly every genuine Ayurvedic treatise describes *Pandu Roga*. The hallmark of *Pandu* is the presence of pallor on the skin. *Kesharadi Ghrita* can be used in *Mridabhakshajanya Pandu* because it is *Pitta Pradhana Vyadhi* and has symptoms such as *Krimikoshthata* and *Panduta*. Iron therapy for a prolonged period may cause iron overload and its deleterious effects. *Kesharadi Ghrita* mentioned in *Charaka Samhita* is taken for the present study for the treatment of *Mridabhakshanajanya Panduroga*. This case demonstrates the successful integration of Ayurvedic and modern treatments. The child's presentation matched classical and clinical features of *Mridbhakshanjanya Pandu*. Rapid correction in anemia and disappearance of pica within 45 days highlight *Kesharadi Ghrita's* complementary role. Probable mechanisms include *Agni Deepana* (digestion enhancement), *Krimighna* (anthelmintic), *Rasa Dhatu Poshana* (nutritional restoration), improved iron assimilation and minimal GI irritation.

CONCLUSION

Kesharadi Ghrita, when used with ferrous ascorbate, provides a well-tolerated, effective treatment for *Mridbhakshanjanya Pandu*. It improves hematological and behavioral symptoms, suggesting broader application in pediatric anemia. It provides a safe, effective, and holistic alternative to conventional treatments, improving clinical outcomes and quality of life for pediatric patients. The study highlights the relevance of integrating Ayurvedic therapies into modern medical practice to address complex health conditions like anemia.

Further research with larger sample sizes and extended follow-up periods is warranted to validate these findings and explore broader applications of *Kesharadi Ghrita* in anemia management.

Recommendations

- Promote Ayurvedic adjuvants in pediatric anemia management.
- Increase community awareness of pica.
- Encourage further research with larger cohorts.

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